

- » Starting Word
- » Deciphering the Word screen
- » Understanding the Ribbon
- » Zooming in and out
- » Quitting Word
- » Minimizing Word

Chapter 1

Hello, Word!

According to the popular book *Pencils For Dummies*, the pencil is the ultimate word processing tool. It's easy to use, it's wireless, and it features the original Undo command, in the form of an eraser. And that's about as funny as *Pencils For Dummies* gets.

As a writing tool, the pencil remains popular and easy to figure out, but it's not that technologically advanced. Your typical Ticonderoga #2 lacks many of the powerful capabilities you find in a sophisticated application like Microsoft Word, which is why Word requires a more formal introduction.

Start Your Word Day

As a digital resident of your PC, Microsoft Word serves as a loyal subject to the king of computer realm, Windows. To get work done in Word, you must contend with the multitudinous ways available in Windows to start the Word program. These methods can vary from the obvious to the obnoxiously cryptic, so instead I present you with the three most common ways to start your Word day:

- » Before you can use Word, your computer must be on and ready to work. So turn on your PC, laptop, or tablet if it's not already on and toasty. Log in to Windows.



REMEMBER



TECHNICAL
STUFF

- » Do not attempt to make toast in your computer.
- » Ensure that you sport a proper posture as you write. Your wrists should be even with your elbows. Your head should tilt down only slightly, though it's best to look straight ahead. Keep your shoulders back and relaxed. Have a minion gently massage your feet.
- » Other nerdy terms for starting a program: Run. Launch. Open. Fire up. Beg. Thrash. Whimper.

Starting Word the traditional way

Propriety demands that I show the traditional, boring way to start Word. I'll be quick:

1. Press the Windows key on the keyboard.

The Windows key is adorned with the Windows logo icon, which I won't illustrate here because it changes more frequently than teenage fashion. The key is nestled between the Ctrl and Alt keys to the left of the spacebar. A duplicate is found on the right side of the spacebar on desktop computers. Use either key.

2. Look for Microsoft Word on the Start menu.

The item might be titled Word or Word 2019 or something similar.

If you don't find Word right away in Windows 10, click the All Apps button to hunt it down. In Windows 7, click the All Programs button.

Sometimes Word is found on a Microsoft Office or Office 2019 folder or submenu.

3. Click the Word icon or button to start the program.

Watch in amazement as the program unfurls on the screen.

Starting Word the best way

The *best* way to start Word, and the way I do it every day, is to click the Word icon on the taskbar. Word starts simply and quickly.

The issue, of course, is how to get the Word icon on the taskbar. If the icon doesn't appear on the taskbar, follow these steps to add it:

1. Find the Word icon on the Start menu.

See the preceding section, Steps 1 and 2.

2. **Right-click the Word icon.**
3. **Choose the command More, Pin to Taskbar.**

The Pin to Taskbar command might appear directly on the right-click menu; otherwise, you find it on the More submenu.

The Word icon is *pinned* (permanently added) to the taskbar. From there you need click it only once to start the program.

Opening a document to start Word

You use the Word program to create *documents*, which are stored on your computer in much the same way as people pile junk into boxes and store them in their garages. To start Word, open a Word document. Follow these steps:



1. **Locate the Document icon.**

Use your Windows kung fu to open the proper folders and hunt down a Word document icon, similar to the one shown in the margin.

2. **Double-click the icon.**

This step is a standard Windows operation: Double-click an icon to open a program. In this case, opening a Word document starts the Word program.

The document is opened and presented on the screen, ready for whatever.

- » You use Word to create documents. They're saved to storage on your computer or in the cloud. Details are offered in Chapter 8.
- » The document name is assigned when it's originally saved. Use the name to determine the document's contents — providing that it was properly named when first saved.
- » Documents are files. As such, they are managed by Windows. If you need to find a lost document or rename it or organize your documents into a folder, you use Windows, not Word.



TECHNICAL
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Behold the Word Program

Like all programs in Windows, Word offers its visage in a program window. It's the place where you get your word processing work done.

Working the Word Start screen

After starting Word, you may first see something called the Word Start screen, as shown in Figure 1-1. It's friendlier than that ominous empty page that has intimidated writers since the dawn of paper.



FIGURE 1-1:
The Word Start
screen.

You can use the Start screen to open a previously opened document, start a new document based on a template, or start with a blank document.

Previously opened documents are listed on the left side of the window, as illustrated in Figure 1-1. Word's templates are found under the Featured heading. Templates you've created appear under the Personal heading. Click a template thumbnail to create a new document based on that template.

To start on a blank document, click the Blank Document template. Then you see the ominous empty page, which I wrote about earlier.

Once you've made your choice, Word is ready for you to start writing. Word is also equally content if you just stare at the screen and await inspiration.



REMEMBER

- » The Word Start screen doesn't appear when you open a document to start Word. Refer to the earlier section "Opening a document to start Word."
- » You can disable the Start screen so that Word always opens with a blank document. See Chapter 33.
- » A *template* is a document that contains preset elements, such as formatting, styles, text, and possibly graphics. You use a template to help you start a common type of document, such as a résumé, a report, or an angry letter to the editor.
- » The Word Start screen appears only when you first start the Word program. It doesn't appear when you start a new document while the Word program window is already open.

Examining Word's main screen

Writing is scary enough when you first see that blank page. With a computer, the level of terror increases because Word festoons its program window with all kinds of controls and doodads. I recommend that you refer to Figure 1-2 to get an idea of some basic terms. Ignore them at your peril.

The details of how all these gizmos work, and the terms to describe them, are covered throughout this book. The good news is that the basic task of typing text is straightforward. See Chapter 2 to get started.



TIP

- » To get the most from Word's window, adjust its size: Use the mouse to drag the window's edges outward. You can also click the window's Maximize button (refer to Figure 1-2) to have the window fill the screen.
- » The largest portion of Word's screen is used for composing text. It looks like a fresh sheet of paper. If you choose to use a template to start a new document, this area may contain some preset text.

Working the Ribbon

An important part of Word's interface is the Ribbon. It's where a majority of Word's commands dwell and where settings are made. These items appear as buttons, input boxes, and menus.

The Ribbon is divided into tabs, as shown in Figure 1-3. Each tab holds separate groups. Within the groups, you find the command buttons and doodads that carry out various word processing duties.

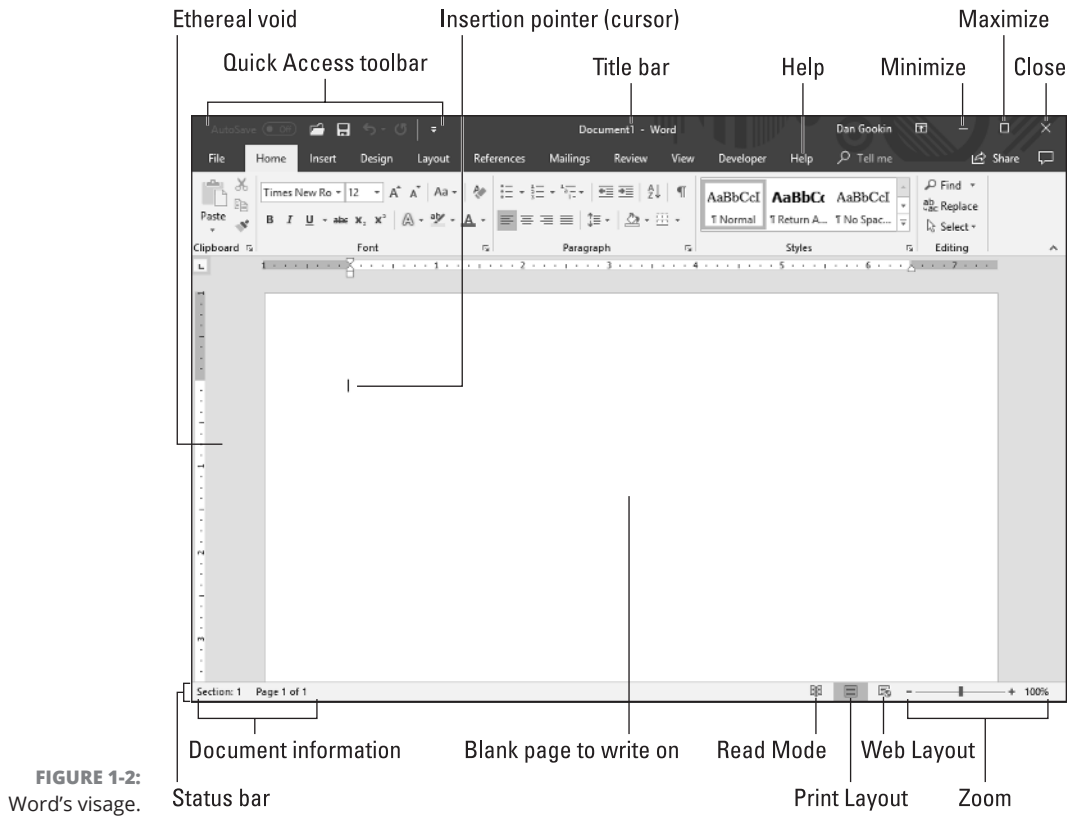


FIGURE 1-2:
Word's visage.

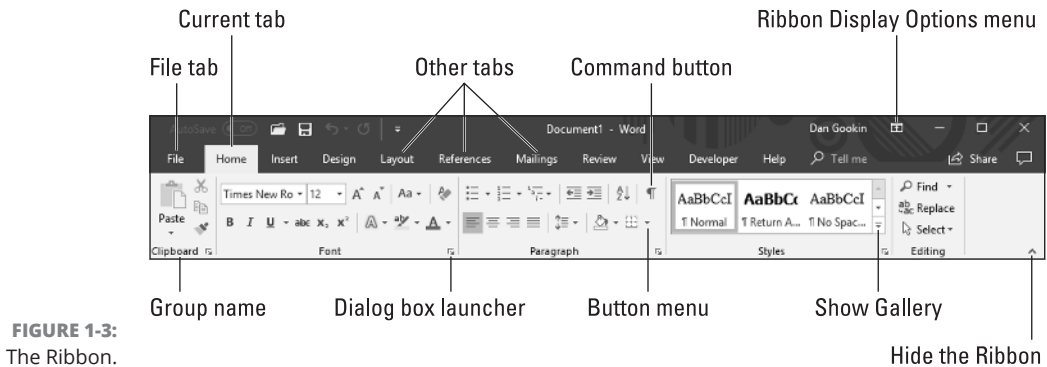


FIGURE 1-3:
The Ribbon.

To use the Ribbon, first click a tab. Then scan the group names to locate the command you need. Finally, click the button to activate the command or to display a menu from which you can choose a command. This book describes finding commands on the Ribbon in exactly this manner: *tab, group, command button*.



TIP



- » Some items on the Ribbon are controls that let you input text or values or adjust other settings.
- » Buttons with menus attached appear with a downward-pointing triangle to the right of the icon, as illustrated in Figure 1-3.
- » Galleries on the Ribbon display a smattering of tiles. To see them all, click the Show Gallery button in the gallery's lower right corner, also shown in Figure 1-3.
- » Use the Dialog Box Launcher icon in the lower right corner of a group to open a dialog box that's relevant to the group's function. Not every group features a dialog box launcher.
- » The amazingly frustrating thing about the Ribbon is that it can change. Some tabs may appear and disappear, depending on what you're doing in Word.
- » To ensure that you always see all the command buttons, adjust the program's window as wide as is practical.
- » Clicking the File tab replaces the contents of the Word window with a screen full of commands and other information. To return to the Word window, click the Back button (shown in the margin) or press the Esc key.

Showing and hiding the Ribbon

Microsoft may believe that showing and hiding the Ribbon is a feature, one that you control according to your preferences. I find that this option frustrates most people, especially when you unintentionally hide the Ribbon.

To resolve Ribbon frustrations, use the Ribbon Display Options menu, located in the upper right area of the Word window and illustrated in Figure 1-3. Choose an item to determine how to display the Ribbon. Your choices are

Auto-Hide Ribbon: The most annoying choice, the Ribbon appears only when you hover the mouse pointer near the top of the document.

Show Tabs: With this choice, only the Ribbon's tabs appear. Click a tab to show the bulk of the Ribbon, which disappears again after you've chosen a command.

Show Tabs and Commands: This option shows the entire Ribbon — tabs and commands — as illustrated in Figures 1-2 and 1-3. This is the choice you probably want.



To temporarily hide the Ribbon, click the Collapse the Ribbon button, labeled in Figure 1-3. To bring back the Ribbon, click a tab, and then at the spot where the Hide the Ribbon button appears, click the Pushpin icon, shown in the margin, to make the Ribbon stay open.



TIP

- » I recommend that you keep the Ribbon visible as you discover the wonders of Word.
- » The online version of Word shows a different Ribbon than the Windows program does. This book doesn't cover the online version specifically, though I recommend that you learn to use the Word program first, and then go online and enjoy (or not) that version of Word.

Working with Word on a tablet

If you're using Word on a tablet, you can adjust the spacing between buttons on the Ribbon by activating Touch mode. This spacing feature makes the Ribbon more useful in Touch mode. Follow these steps:

1. Click or touch the **Customize Quick Access Toolbar** button.

The button appears to the right of the Quick Access toolbar buttons. (Refer to Figure 1-2.)

2. Choose **Touch/Mouse Mode**.



The Touch Mode button appears on the Quick Access toolbar, shown in the margin.

Tap the button to switch the Ribbon between Mouse and Touch modes. In Mouse mode, the buttons on the Ribbon appear closer together. In Touch mode, more space is added between the buttons, which makes it easier for your stubby fingers to tap the proper command.

Changing the document view

Just to keep you on your toes, Word offers multiple ways to view your document in its window. The blank area where you write, which should be full of text by now, can be altered to present information in different ways. Why would you want to do that? You don't! But it helps to know about the different ways so that you can change them back.

The standard way to view a document is called Print Layout view. It's the view shown in this book, and it's how Word typically presents a document. A virtual page appears on the screen, with four sides, like a sheet of paper with text in the middle. What you see on the screen is pretty much what you'll see in the final results, whether printed or published as an electronic document.

The other views are

Read Mode: Use this view to read a document like an eBook. The Ribbon and pretty much the rest of Word is hidden while in Read mode.

Web Layout: This view presents your document as a web page. It's available should you use Word's dubious potential as a web page editor.

Outline: This mode helps you organize your thoughts, as covered in Chapter 25.

Draft: Draft view presents only basic text, not all the formatting and fancy features, such as graphics.

To switch between Read Mode, Print Layout, and Web Layout views, click one of the View buttons, found in the lower right corner of the Word program window. (Refer to Figure 1-2.)

To get to Outline and Draft views, as well as to see all View modes in one location, click the View tab and choose the appropriate command button from the Views group.



REMEMBER

When your document looks weird in the Word program window, switch back to Print Layout view to fix the problem. Click the Print Layout button on the status bar, or click the View tab and choose Print Layout in the Views group.

Making text look larger or smaller

When the information in Word's window just isn't big enough, don't increase the font size! Instead, whip out the equivalent of a digital magnifying glass, the Zoom command. It helps you enlarge or reduce your document's presentation, making it easier to see or giving you the Big Picture look.

Several methods are available to zoom text in Word. The most obvious is to use the Zoom control found in the lower right corner of the Word window, on the status bar. Adjust the slider right or left to make the text larger or smaller, respectively.

To set specific zoom sizes, click the 100% button on the status bar. Use the Zoom dialog box to set a size based on percentage, page width, or even multiple pages.



REMEMBER

- » Zooming doesn't affect how a document prints — only how it looks on the screen.
- » For more specific zoom control, click the View tab and use the commands found in the Zoom group.

CAJOLING WORD TO HELP YOU

Like most Windows programs, a Help system is available in Word. Press the F1 key to summon this support, which displays the Word Help pane on the side of the document window. There you can type a topic, a command name, or even a question in the box to search for help.

The F1 key also works any time, and the information displayed tends to be specific to whatever you're doing in Word.

Little buttons that look like question marks appear in various places in the program. Click one of these buttons to also summon Word Help.

In the age of Google, Word also offers a Tell Me What You Want to Do help box on the Ribbon. Type a topic or question in the box and press the Enter key to see a quick list of commands or suggestions, or to obtain online help. Oh, and yes: Word's Help works best when your computer has an Internet connection.



TIP

- » If the computer's mouse has a wheel button, you can zoom by holding the Ctrl key on your keyboard and rolling the mouse wheel up or down. Rolling up zooms in; rolling down zooms out.
- » If you find that the document zoom has changed accidentally, it's probably because of the Ctrl+mouse wheel trick described in the preceding bullet.
- » Word has plenty of document-viewing tools that work similarly to the Zoom command, including side-by-side page presentation and tools for viewing multiple documents. See Chapter 24 for details.

End Your Word Day

It's the pinnacle of etiquette to know when and how to excuse oneself. For example, the phrase "Well, I must be off" works a lot better than growling, "I wish you all would rot" before leaving a family dinner. The good news for Word is that's completely acceptable to quit the program without hurting its feelings.

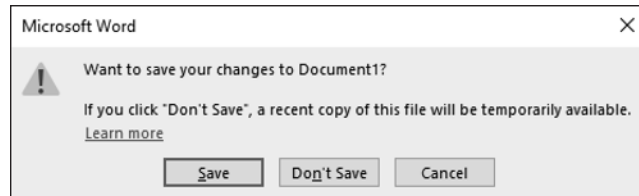
Quitting Word

When you've finished word processing and you don't expect to return to it any time soon, quit the Word program. Click the X button in the upper right corner of the Word program window. (Refer to Figure 1-2.)

The catch? You have to close each and every Word document window that's open before you can proclaim that you've completely quit Word.

The other catch? Word won't quit during that shameful circumstance when you've neglected to save a document. If so, you're urged to save, as shown in Figure 1-4. My advice is to click the Save button to save your work; see Chapter 8 for specific document-saving directions.

FIGURE 1-4:
Better click that
Save button.



If you click the Don't Save button, your work isn't saved and Word quits. If you click the Cancel button, Word doesn't quit and you can continue working.

- » You don't have to quit Word just to start editing another document. Refer to the next couple of sections for helpful, time-saving information.
- » After quitting Word, you can continue to use Windows to accomplish whatever task comes next. Or you can choose to do something relaxing, like playing *Baby Vampire Killer IV*.

Closing a document without quitting Word

You don't always have to quit Word. For example, if you're merely stopping work on one document to work on another, quitting Word is a waste of time. Instead, you *close* the first document. Follow these steps:

1. Click the File tab.

The File screen appears. Commands line the left side of the screen, as shown in Figure 1-5.

2. Choose the Close command.
3. Save the document, if you're prompted to do so.

The shame! Always save before closing. Tsk-tsk.

Commands

Return to document

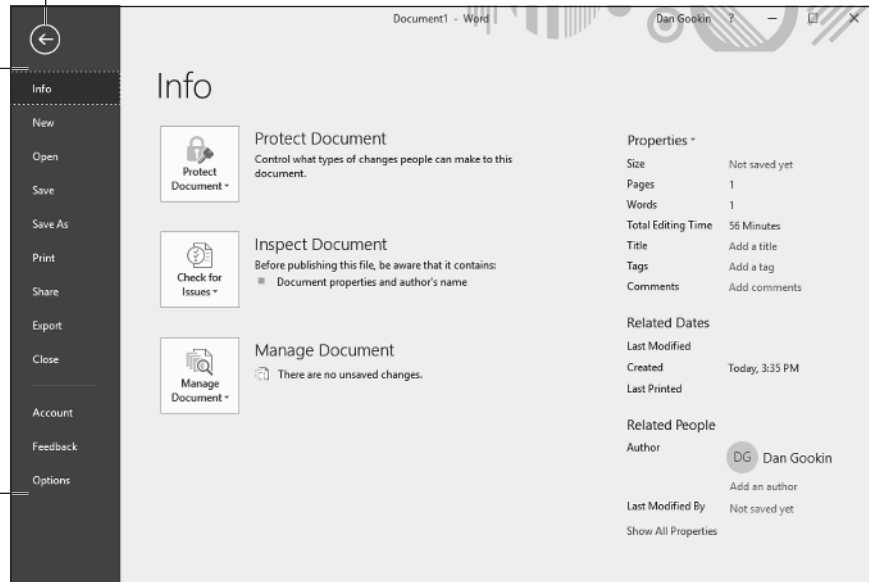


FIGURE 1-5:
The File tab
screen.

After the document has closed, you return to the main Word window. You don't see a document in the window, and many command buttons are dimmed (unavailable). At this point, you can create a new document or open a document you previously saved.

Bottom line: There's no point in quitting Word when all you want to do is start editing a new document.



REMEMBER

» There's no urgency to close a document. I keep mine open all day, saving frequently. Occasionally, I wander off to do something not work related, like play a game or see who's being obnoxious on Facebook. To return to the document at any time, click its button on the Windows taskbar.



TIP

- » The keyboard shortcut for the Close command is Ctrl+W. This command may seem weird, but it's a standard keyboard shortcut used to close documents in many programs.
- » To swiftly start a new, blank document in Word, press Ctrl+N.

Setting Word aside

Don't quit Word when you know that you'll use it again soon. In fact, I've been known to keep Word open and running on my computer for *weeks* at a time. The secret is to use the Minimize button, found in the upper right corner of the screen. (Refer to Figure 1-2.)

Click the Minimize button to shrink the Word window to a button on the taskbar. With the Word window out of the way, you can do other things with your computer. Then when you're ready to word-process again, click the Word button on the taskbar to restore the Word window to the desktop.

